WILL TO POWER

An Inquiry by Trial and Error

BY KURT RIEZLER

THERE is much loose talk about a fundamental urge in human nature called the will to power, glorified by some and abhorred by others. If we ask what this will to power wills, most answers waver, few enlighten. A mere name, it seems to mean anything from a man's joy in violence and cruelty to the desire of a mathematician to master his number-world. Is there a single quality common to the various meanings and entitled to a name?

Take a group in which power is not yet institutionalized—the Chicago gangs, inquired into by Mr. Thrasher,[1] or any class of school boys whose life is not completely regulated by parents and teachers. Some boys enjoy commanding, others eagerly follow their lead. Capacity and desire to lead or to be led may be disparate. Both the impulse to command and the need or readiness to obey differ in intensity. Thus at the outset we are confronted with the mystery of the human soul, capable of "devotion" as well as of "will to power."

I

Let us assume that a leader wishes to dominate a group, and review the means he might employ.

Coercion. The leader is physically stronger and can thrash others. He can punish: others obey through fear. Superior strength alone, however, will not suffice. The leader must have the will to use it. The arm of mere force is short, and the others disobey when the leader's will weakens. The arm of force has been greatly lengthened by modern techniques for all leaders

[1] Frederic M. Thrasher, *Gang; A Study of 1313 Gangs in Chicago* (Chicago 1927).

who know how to use these inventions and withhold their use from others.

Rewards. The leader may be the only one who has an automobile: the others kowtow to him in order to get a ride. Fear and hope together are stronger than either alone. Hope without fear, interest without force, are often weak—not only in school. Hope, frustrated, grows impatient; fulfilled, it tends to forget.

Prestige. What sort of superiority is there other than of muscles and rewards? I venture to say that the best student is seldom the "natural" leader. There are diverse sorts of superiority. The leader may "know the ropes," be a daredevil, not stop at anything, possess a particular skill, be a politician, capture the affections, get away with anything, have more initiative, greater endurance or resourcefulness.

Certain other sorts of superiority need special emphasis:

1. *Status*—The leader may be the fortunate possessor of inherited authority—a Daughter of the American Revolution, grandson of a president, nephew of a movie star.
2. *"Charis"*—The leader is charming; he is so likeable. Others delight in pleasing him. The leader rewards them by smiling his not yet famous smile; he punishes by looking away. Such is the power of charm. The Greeks called it *charis.* This source of power has been potent until recently. To attribute *charisma* to leaders who are conspicuous by their lack of *charis* would be as absurd as to derive *canis* from *non canendo.*
3. *Deception*—The leader may have a gift for seeming to be what he is not—to be stronger, shrewder, cleverer than he is. Boys are not so easily deceived as nations.

None of these superiorities, genuine or pseudo, will bring about real domination without one essential—a stronger will. Will, will power, strength of will, are on every tongue. I doubt that, as in the case of intellect, quantification does not blur the far more important qualitative diversities. I modestly propose a distinction that to me seems both necessary and useful.

Every portion of the mysterious thing physicists call matter is

surrounded by a field of force—in classical physics matter itself is a field of force. I dare say every human being is surrounded by a mental field, which is a field of force. In mental contact with any other person you enter a vectorial field, which demands a certain behavior: you respond unconsciously by a certain "adjustment" to the human style of that person. You change your manners slightly, you lower your voice. Or you do not, and so you must make an effort to resist. A lady's will may be weak, yet her mere presence may impose a line of conduct on other people. An atmosphere surrounds her, a realm of norms and codes, to which we are responsive. Her mere presence entails a field of force. Personalities differ in weight. Let us call such a field the static field of personality.

The field is not by itself the "stronger will." Even matter in physics seems to be more than a field of force. Physicists speak of matter as a "dynamic agent," producing and inducing fields. We may use this term for the mysterious faculty of a human being for generating particular fields by commanding this or that—a potential creativity of fields of force. We should differentiate this dynamic faculty from the static field of personality.

Human beings in general do not know what to do. The leader is keen on making decisions. If you like to think "I love you" was the first sentence ever spoken by man, the second was certainly "I will, you ought." Whenever someone enjoys commanding, someone else eagerly obeys. Everyone realizes that he must put some strength into his commands. A man learning to ride a horse, a hunter calling his dog, knows that the animal has a mysterious awareness of the real strength of the will behind commands. If it doubts this strength, horse or dog goes its own way. When a political speaker faces a crowd he must feel sure of his will to master it. There is something called the "stronger will," whatever it may be.

Enumeration of the means a will to dominate might use, however, is misleading. It emphasizes technique. Machiavelli does not question power: accepting the end, he inquires into the means.

He would advise the would-be leader of a gang to combine as many of these means as he can, and to find substitutes for those he lacks, or to build up a fiction. If he is deficient in physical strength, he should look for an aide who, as an ideal soldier, has muscle if little judgment. With threats and rewards he can keep his adjutant under his thumb, entangling him in ways that make him dependent or reluctant to face exposure. The leader should have at least one other aide to check up on the first, and the various aides should dislike one another. If the leader is not of the elite he should invent a yarn that endows him with some authority. He may say that his great-grandmother was given a son by Napoleon, returning from Russia through the leader's ancestral town. Many tyrants in history have traced as fantastic a lineage. Unlike them, the leader in school can neither appoint an oracle to reveal that his grandfather was the grandson of Heracles, son of Zeus, nor hire a poet to sing the epic of his grandmother's and Napoleon's love. But so far as this Machiavelli for boys teaches a mere technique, he too may accept the inefficiency of morals or the immorality of efficiency.

If we take mere technique as our guide, we go astray. We are bound to emphasize the efficiency of different means whose end is presupposed to be one and the same: power. But dominance by force and by charm produce different sorts of relations between human beings. Domination or dominance are relations between human beings and must be determined and differentiated in terms of such relations.

The Emperor Wu, as the wise men of old China report, looked southward in perfect calm and the empire was in order. You might well say that he established a record of power for all time, though none ever aimed at so high a mark again. The opposite type of powerholder is more familiar. Difference in means is a difference in ends and results—and certainly in motives.

The list of means, moreover, is not even complete. We cannot isolate the relation between the leader and his followers. They are related not only to one another; the activities of each are con-

cerned not only with the others but also with a world that puts questions and demands answers. Their relations to one another are what they are in reference to activities in which each wrestles with and woos the whole of his world. Human beings dominate or obey with respect to this wrestling and wooing.

A boy has an idea that something should be done. His passion is contagious. He dominates the others by his devotion to a cause he succeeds in persuading the others to adopt. His power over them is the strength of his devotion and the role the cause may play in their relation to their little worlds. In history this is the richest source of the greatest power. Thus devotion to a cause seems to be a means to power.

Here the question arises: what does a powerholder primarily want? The cause or the power? Power for the sake of a cause or a cause for the sake of power? Only in extreme cases is the answer simple. Means are ends and ends means. Man and cause resist separation, even in cases like Mohammed and Ivan the Terrible. There may be no either-or. Perhaps human beings with either the will to power or devotion to a cause strive for something that is neither personal power nor an impersonal cause.

II

Starting from the means that the will to power can tap serves only to outline the breadth of the problem. I dismiss the means and proceed to the motives. The leader, we are told, enjoys his "power." Power seems to be the greatest of the five sweetnesses of life, whatever the other four may be. What is it that makes power so sweet? Human beings, says Hobbes, have infinite appetites and desires. They want power in order to satisfy their desires — power as means. Certainly. This man, however, wants power—domination for domination's sake. History hardly records a man coming to real power who desired it merely as a precondition for satisfying other appetites and desires.

Certainly this meaning of power accompanies it throughout all its manifestations and mixes in all its phenomena. But it is

hardly power's chief or entire sweetness. Today's power is means for tomorrow's power. Power produces power. For "the nature of power," says Hobbes, "is in this point like to fame, increasing as it proceeds, or like the motion of heavy bodies, which the further they go make still the more haste." Or like money, the essence of which is to be a quantity of means. Power, however, like money, if used to satisfy appetites and desires is more likely to destroy than to produce itself.

The sweetness of power as means, however great, is but accessory. Hobbes, in calling a particular desire "vanity," goes beyond his concept of power as mere means, abstract potentiality. Vanity is a feeling of superiority, of the triumph of being foremost. In this formula both the will to power and vanity lose their specificness. Though in many cases they merge, there is will to power without vanity, vanity without will to power. The vain man may dispense with power; the really powerful man with vanity. The youngest secretary in any government department always knows some individuals who are content with show, publicity, footlights and decorations, and are happy if someone else makes the decisions, and others who shun the light and crave to pull the strings behind the scene, although the average civil servant combines average amounts of vanity and will to power.

Hobbes goes a step further. Wounded vanity demands revenge, frustrated revenge generates hate. Modern psychologists speak of a "compulsory power drive" originating in frustration, revenge, hate, resentment. Although none can deny, in face of evidence open to all, that this compulsory power drive is potent not only in family tyrants but throughout history in powerholders of a particular kind, will to power cannot be restricted to this species.

Nietzsche does not determine the meaning of power in his "will to power," which to him is man's fundamental urge. He differentiates, however, between a will to power that he scorns and a will to power that he glorifies. The first is the modern compulsory drive—through weakness and resentment; the second, will to power through strength enjoying a superabundance of vi-

tality. His emphasis is on an activity that overcomes resistance. Man, in overcoming resistance, realizes a potential splendor. Nietzsche's strength lies in the refined and differentiated analysis of different sorts of will to power, his weakness in a unification that has no basis other than the sameness of a word.

You may say that man's joy is in his own realization. The potential singer enjoys his actual singing, the orator his speaking, the skier his racing down the slopes. But why domination—whence power's distinction? If it is mere activity, why not throw stones, chop wood, beat off the heads of thistles? A boy who desires to dominate may do all these things, but as substitutes, with somewhat subdued pleasure. Although Nietzsche's emphasis in glorifying power seems to be on man's joy in overcoming resistance, activity as such hardly tells the story.

Stones and thistles do not respond to Jimmy's power in the way John responds. Xerxes whips the sea in vain. He cannot persuade the sea to recognize him as Xerxes, the king of kings. Xerxes is not Xerxes for the sea, I am not I for the thistles and stones. You, whether resisting or submitting, respond. I am something to you. It is this difference that matters. As we near the core of the problem, we should move with caution, as on dangerous ground.

Stones may be something to me. I am nothing to stones. Stones are not beings in and for themselves, to which I could be something. Human beings have their being in themselves, *in se ipsis*, not only by virtue of a relation to something else, *ad alium*. Such beings are called subjects, or by an older and now emasculated name, "substances." I do not want to dwell upon the metaphysical problem. The distinction is obvious: you are not a stone. You are a being to whom I can be something: the leader, the master. In your being a servant, a slave, a follower, I am a master, a leader to myself. I need you. I depend on you. By my very will to power there is a weft of servitude in my domination. Leader and follower receive from and return to each other a share in their reality. This holds for all human or social relations. It is

at the bottom of our existence and was true before anyone discovered that humans associate for mutual protection, food or sex.

In being something in and for ourselves we are something to others—in being something to others we are something to ourselves. The leader needs a follower. To be a master at all, he must be a master to someone. For this reason above all others, Robinson needs Friday and has ever needed him.

Now we have reached a common ground, on which will to power and vanity can be differentiated. In all human relations and in all passions that rule these relations, our "being-to-ourselves" and our "being-to-others" are correlated. Here will to power borders on vanity, desire for glory, ambition—even on love, hate, devotion. All human passions are born together in one birth of the same mother.

There is a give and take between our being-to-ourselves and our being-to-others, occurring in many shapes and ways. One way implies the possibility of all the others. A man capable of a will to power must be capable of ambition, love, vanity, hate and devotion. The potentialities inhere in one another. The different human passions, instincts, urges are not side by side, gathering in a casual aggregate.

Will to power and vanity are different ways in which our being-to-ourselves is interrelated with our being-to-others. Vanity is contented with admiration. We enjoy the favorable opinions of others, their praise of our beauty, our skill. We mirror ourselves in the opinion others may have or pretend to have. We enjoy the lies they utter, even when we know they are lies. Vanity can feed even on appearances. Will to power is not so easily satisfied. It may despise appearances and disregard praise. It demands real, not imaginary food.

Let us assume a leader who demands the real thing. The others must be compelled to realize that the master lays down the law. Stones do not realize it. My power depends on your feeling that it is power. You must feel it and behave in accordance with my will. Some leaders may be content with followers who

unconsciously follow their lead. Most leaders, however, seem to prefer followers who are aware of their servitude. Is it vanity, or only joy in an activity in which the leader, breaking down resistance, actuates his "Self"? Each individual case may demand an individual answer. *Oderint dum metuant.* They may hate, so long as they fear. This political device is withal a statement about psychology. You can change it and say *Metuant dum ament.* They may fear, so long as they love. In any case, whether through love or hate, the master is something to others, and is returned by them to himself as the master in their love or hate and fear.

Vanity, ambition, desire for glory may be differentiated as different forms of a similar give and take. Admiration, renown, fame, honor—in them all we are something in and for ourselves by virtue of our being something-to-others.

Should this petty feeling of a superiority in which the master enjoys being the master in the servitude of others who obey really be able to account for the sweetness of power, the desire of which is said to push and pull men in all countries and ages as the strongest force in history?

But we cannot isolate this sweetness. It is not so petty if we keep in mind the first sweetness of power—means for satisfying all kinds of appetites and desires; and the second sweetness—joy in mere activity, especially since power as activity lets power as means grow by itself. Should we not derive power's supreme delight from the suffusion of these sweetnesses with vanity? After all, this suffusion should not be less sweet than any power might be expected to be.

A man may want to dominate others in order to use them or their services or their property as means for satisfying his appetites and desires. He may at the same time enjoy his activity in breaking their resistance, feed his vanity on their submission and even sip from their suffering the honey-sweet drink of revenge for his own pains or frustration. Could we not, if we accumulate these different sweetnesses, understand the lure of power? But then will to power is no longer the unity of a fundamental urge.

III

Yet again this aspect is wrong. It can tell only one side of the story. It isolates the relation between the dominating and the dominated. Human beings and their relations to one another are what they are in relation to other things, to an environment, to something we call the world. The give and take in the interrelation of our being-to-ourselves and our being-to-others occurs within the broader context of the interrelation of man and the world.

The terms environment and world are ambiguous. Environment is not the physical environment. It is what the things surrounding you are to you, not to the physicist. World means your world of action and behavior. The two terms are not merely different names for the same thing. Environment means an aggregate, the sum of things around you. Your relation to your environment is a composite of single stimuli and single responses, in which you are related to single things. World means a whole, a totum, not a compositum. We live in a space which we embrace and by which we are embraced. This space has a "whole-structure." It may be narrow or wide, loose or close and firm. The Russians and the Swiss live in different mental spaces. The whole-structure of their worlds is different. World and environment are not the same, although they depend on each other. Changes in our environment may or may not affect the whole-structure of our world. Changes in this whole-structure cannot help altering all single relations to all single things in our environment. This may happen, for instance, when we fall in love, seriously and for the first time. The relations between leader and follower, master and servant, are what they are in relation not only to the single things and conditions in their environment but also to the world in which they live. Man does not merely respond to an aggregate of stimuli. He builds up his world as a whole in which he lives. He goes on building, never stopping as long as he lives. To what stimuli he responds and in what way depends on the whole-structure of his world. Human life is wrestling, talking, quarreling with the whole of a world, a give and take in which we and this whole determine each

other. The process can by no means be reduced to the sum total of our wrestlings with the single things in our environment, with which we are connected through need and cupidity.

Such a distinction, required by the phenomena, replaces in this study the usual distinction between ideas and interests. Man's ideas are concerned with his world as a whole. Interests refer man to an environment of things on which he depends through appetite, desire, need and danger. Both world and idea have an ultimate horizon, embracing a whole. So far as our relations to the things of our environment depend on the whole-structure of our world, our interests depend on our ideas. So far as the whole-structure of our world depends on our relations to the things of our environment, our ideas cannot help depending on our interests. The one helps to shape the other. Man never ceases to struggle for an agreement between his interests and ideas, or his environment and his world.

Let me resort to boy life, in order to avoid the impervious complex in which historical life entwines personal will to power and impersonal causes, interests and ideas, man's desires and the demands of the world.

A boy, building up his world, concentrates with some passion upon harassing a brook by constructing a system of dams and canals. Doing it alone is but half the fun. He needs others, not merely for help and cooperation. He needs somebody to whom the brook means what it means to him. He is not the world-builder if there is no companion. The dams and canals should mean to others what they mean to him. His world should be the world of others. He lays down the law. Others obey, happy to participate in his world. The boy is enthusiastic about his construction. He is devoted to a cause, and he demands from his companions the same devotion. Now we are confronted in both domination and submission with a new element in the structure of power—about which most philosophers of power are carefully silent, though the struggle for power in history would hardly be so great were it not for causes and devotion.

First of all, what in heaven's name is a "cause," since cause is said to be so important? The boys' brook construction is not a "cause." Or is it? It is if and so far as it represents their world and thus plays a role in building up the space in which they live. It would not be a cause if a mere desire or appetite connected the boys with a piece of their environment. Causes differ in strength. The source and measure of their strength is their role in the whole-structure of our world. In history too, odd causes compel devotion.

Now begins a story of endless variations, in which both domination and servitude interweave with devotion in an inseparable unity. Devotion to a cause can be a means of dominating others. Domination of others can be a means of furthering a cause. The one can be as true as the other, in the same person and at the same time. In devotion to a cause an Ego transcends his ego and opens the world. But it is the Ego himself who builds this world and is its center in the allegiance of others. In devotion to a cause, the same being who, in his will to power, longs to be the center of others' worlds, craves to have his own center outside himself, enjoys and escapes his Ego.

The companions begin to share the devotion of the leader. The idea was not theirs. They would not have animated the brook and changed a thing of their physical environment into a world of imaginary meanings. The leader builds up the world of his companions. Their devotion to the cause becomes devotion to the leader while remaining devotion to the cause: the two devotions intermingle. Their unity may not last. Both the boys and the causes go on moving. The leader detaches himself from a cause to which his companions still cling in obedience to their leader of yesterday. Power fetters itself in its own works. These developments interact but need not correspond. Their discord tests the relative strength of personal will to power and impersonal devotion in the leader, of allegiance to the leader and devotion to the cause in the followers. In the boys' play-life such frictions merely spice the game. In history they keep things moving by breaking tyrannies, empires, states, churches, and reversing the social order.

Whether on playgrounds or battlefields, the phenomena of domination and submission cannot be understood if we isolate the relations between master and servant or link them merely to needs, impulses, appetites and desires, which an environment, as an aggregate of things, stimulates. Human beings, in their relations to one another, wrestle with the world as a whole. Domination and servitude occur within this process. Leaders build up their worlds in subduing others who resist or submit, who cling to their own way of building their world or accept the leader's world as their own. The leader's world-building takes place in his followers, theirs in him—the one through power, the other through devotion.

What about power's sweetness? A new element enters the scene. Devotion, too, has its sweetness. Its sweetness and the sweetness of power join in one and the same river, and no chemist of the human soul can separate their waters.

This new element, however, changes all the others. Man, transcending the ego, builds up a world and by virtue of his devotion gets back a greater ego that is no longer merely an ego. Now his appetites and desires are not mere appetites and desires, his vanity not mere vanity, his activity no longer activity for activity's sake. But it is through others that man's devotion works this miracle. The Ego and the Tu need the world. The Ego and the world need the Tu. Life as well as history breathes in concords and discords that create and destroy one another.

Will to power has not the unity of a fundamental urge. It has different sources, whose waters can but must not unite. History, the great mixer, never mixes two identical drinks. Every case is unique, although the ingredients remain the same. Man, the ever-changing animal, is and will be what he ever was.

IV

If the unity of a will to power is cut into pieces, that does not mean that the pieces can be put side by side or that a list of unconnected motives, impulses or instincts answers the question. The

enthronement of fundamental urges, such as will to power or libido, from which all the other motives should be derived, owes its lure to the deficiency of such lists. But the unity it achieves is merely the unity of an undefined word. Man's different urges, impulses, motives, instincts can neither be put side by side nor forced into the unity of such a fundamental urge.

Man's passions and emotions can be differentiated in terms of dynamic relations between Ego, Tu, We and the world. If we could share Spinoza's ambition and know the human heart as a system of geometry, we might deduce love from will to power, changing one of the parameters that describe variable relations between Ego, Tu, We and the world. Fortunately we do not know the system and are permitted to enjoy its puzzles. But whether we know the system or not, there are rules. All passions are born together. All are ever present as potentialities of the human soul, and each implies all the others.

The variations are countless, their richness is inexhaustible. It may happen that, through devotion to a common cause, domination and submission develop into friendship and love. They may remain domination and submission and yet all may be changed. When common devotion creates friendship it creates a "we." This "we" assumes the role of the world in which I and You live and becomes itself a cause. Causes produce groups. Groups produce causes. Finally groups are causes. Within the ideal group, animated by something we call love, mutal domination means mutual submission. If there is a leader, he may dominate not me and you, but the "we." I and You may be devoted not to the leader but to the "we."[2] There is no ideal case. Our hearts always combine what our brains try to divide. I may love you and be devoted to the we, and yet enjoy an Ego dominating a Tu.

As a leader in his devotion to a cause escapes the prison of the ego, the role of vanity in his domination of others decreases with increasing devotion. Vanity refers the cause to the ego. Devotion refers the ego to the cause. Yet man in transcending himself re-

[2] See my article "Jack and Jill" in *Social Research*, vol. 6, no. 4 (November 1939).

mains the ego, and vanity, like man's shadow, longer or shorter, never leaves man.

I may be pleased at your devotion, yet a thread of disappointment mingles with this pleasure. Will to power, though demanding devotion, is activity; activity needs resistance to break. I can hardly have it both ways. I need two people, the one's resistance and the other's devotion. In history lust for power seeks and always gets two sets of people to dominate.

It is the paradox of power that he who encounters resistance longs for devotion, he who has but devotion craves resistance. Men in power who have two sets of subjects need not worry about the paradox. In extreme cases a historical leader in a dictatorial or imperial role slashes like an angry ape both against the devout for their nonresistance, and against the resistant for their nondevotion. This holds for conspicuous cases in which a leader whose will to power feeds on revenge and hate yet tries to escape his distorted self in a morbid devotion to an imaginary cause.

Most of such will to power is insatiable; it is bound to break what it needs and to need what it wants to break. Will to power does not find its sweetness in the nonresistance of an object of mere cupidity. A person, a Tu capable of resisting, not a thing, makes power sweet. Power, destroying freedom, destroys its own joy.

Will to power desires both the doing and the result. Mere joy in activity builds no empire. Rational planning must be capable of renouncing this joy. You cannot interpret the struggle for power in history in terms of rational planning and its errors. Will to power as activity is bound to spoil its work—by will to power, not by error—except in the case of the Emperor Wu.

Frustration, revenge and hate do not occur only in the history of individuals. A group sets their hearts upon a cause, builds up a world, others destroy it. They resent the destruction of the world which was theirs. Hate and desire for revenge originate in devotion to a cause. The two sorts of hate may join. A will to power feeding on both tends to surpass all others in strength, cruelty and acumen—as the course and aftermath of revolutions make plain.

A gang fights a rival gang for a playground. The leader cannot help handing over some slices of his leadership. His stooges form an "inner circle." The term is the same in the Chicago slums and in Moscow, Berlin, Rome and elsewhere. They succeed in enjoying both their devotion to the leader in dominating the others and their domination of the others in their devotion to the leader. They transcend their egos in their being for the leader and are returned to themselves in both the leader's grace and the respect of the others. In every hierarchy, the more subservient the stooge to his superior, the more he plays the master to his inferiors. They compete in devotion to the leader, not only for a greater share of his power but also for a higher standing in his favor, and not only because favor is a means to power. There are clerks who, to be happy, need both the gracious smile of the boss and the submissive glances of the typists. Whenever a group becomes a cause in itself, ambition proper makes its appearance. What you are to yourself depends on what you are to others. What you are to others depends on your position in the group. Any large administration offers ample opportunity to observe how will to personal power and devotion to an impersonal cause feed on each other, vanity or ambition joining in their growth.

However unique each individual case may be, all kinds of domination and servitude are not merely relations between human beings as separate units. All are world-building beings in a world, transcending themselves and returned to themselves, bound to give to and take from others what they are to themselves. They need one another not merely to satisfy appetites and desires, but also to build up a world in which they try to be to one another what they are. In this give and take all human passions interact.

In historical life, however, the struggle for power among human beings seems to be more than a matter of relations between master and servant, their worlds and their devotion to a cause. Something is born: not a human being, not a group, not a world, not a cause. A mere instrument, it assumes a life of its own, conquers and uses individual groups and causes, and finally claims to be its

own end: the state. I swell the waters of the little brook in which the boys build their canals and dams; call it Nile, Euphrates or Hwang Ho; let a leader of five thousand years ago build dams and canals and fertilize the soil that feeds his tribe; thus introduce need and hunger; extend the cause through centuries, and find after some generations a king heading the first modern state, grown out of the construction of dams and canals, demanding long-term planning, experts in engineering, calculating, accounting and taxation. A material and mental world centers around the river. God, the king and the river are tied to one another in an elaborate system of mutual pledges and help ingrained in the minds of the people by inherited fairy tales. Three sets of helpers —soldiers, writers and priests—surround the king and compete with one another for slices of his power and favor, and join in dominating hard-working subjects by the combined use of all sorts of spiritual and material fears and rewards.

Power is institutionalized. It is concentrated in a machine. The struggle for power is a struggle to come into or remain in power, to get a partial or total hold on the machine, or increase its intensity and range. The political aspects of power overshadow the human. The shadow changes our views and may alter the names we use; it does not change the essence.

Millennia pass. Groups outlive their original causes, states outlive their original groups. The machine poses as cause and tries to absolutize itself. Yet, however garlanded by both interests and ideas, it is but the poor instrument at hand for any use or misuse, source of servitude, safeguard of liberty, man's best friend or worst scourge: according to whatever man's will to power springs from, vanity or ambition, hate, revenge, devotion to causes, real or fake. The tool overpowers the worker. The machine craves efficiency for efficiency's sake.

Finally, man, the foolish idolator of an instrument, awakes as the slave of a machine handed over to a will to power which, swollen by hate and revenge, rallies outcasts and failures, atomizes groups and monopolizes causes. Ruling classes of experts and fools,

lame and tired, chattering a lip-service to remnants of old causes, are punished for lacking both will to power and devotion, and forced to listen in stupefaction to the song of hate and destruction that raucous voices screech in their ears.

The institutional aspect of power, in whatever form, can but unroll the old material and crumple it into new folds. Man is still the same, the best of all animals and by far the worst.

Nowadays such a view is held in little esteem among learned scholars. The searchlights of scientific analysis controlled by a specific way of putting particular questions are turned in another direction and, like all searchlights, are bound to darken further the unlighted area.

I have tried to determine will to power in terms of relations between I, you, we, environment, world, being-to-oneself and being-to-others. I have tried to hint at the possibility that other passions—vanity, love, ambition, devotion—could be determined as different kinds of relations among the same terms. These terms do not depend on material objects and conditions. Perhaps we ought not to allow our conceptual scheme of a world of objects to creep into our determination of human passions, lest we be fooled by our own methods into a sort of relativism that is but the result of the frame of reference we choose.

The terms I have used concern structural elements and relations within the life of man as a finite being among other beings in a world. They endeavor to articulate the "existential situation." Although they do not pretend to be final, they may indicate a way to rediscover the link that connects the diverse human passions and impulses and come to an understanding of why the being called man, if capable of the will to power, is also capable of vanity, love, devotion, hate and shame; likes to play, lies or seeks the truth. Thereon, however, hangs a long tale.

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